

JUDITH'S FIRST BIG SCOOP

Drawings by Wilson C. Dexter

BY ANNE SHANNON MONROE

SLEEP wouldn't come to Judith. Her evening with Helen Sloane had aroused and excited her. Suffering had added a haunting mournfulness to the young widow's dark beauty that made one want to do things for her, to see her happy again in her oldtime radiant way. It had made Judith exert herself to interest her. She had even invaded her own inner chamber of sorrows for her friend's sake; she had talked gaily of her editor and his varying moods, of his seeming so grave and superior at times, so cynical and disillusioned at others, and then again he would be all boy, "not a day older than Sam."

Helen's face had lighted, and she had listened in smiling silence. It was the only subject that got a response from her. "You dear little Judie!" she had said so tenderly, and kissed her a second time, when Judith rose to go.

And now Judith was living it all over again—and thinking how you didn't give up a man at one stroke, as you supposed you did, but you gave him up afresh every time you faced the fact of another's greater charm for him. Had she been writing a story about love, not having had this experience, she wouldn't have known any better than to let her heroine do all her suffering at the moment of renunciation. She tried to be grateful for this point. Judith was diligently "cashing her troubles" these days, making her own experiences and discoveries add to her knowledge store, that she might gain insight as a writer; but just now she passed hurriedly from the statistical item to the reflection that Helen was three months a widow, and before very long it would be perfectly proper for her editor to renew the attentions that had been so abruptly terminated by her sudden and cataclysmic marriage.

THE front door opened. Judith heard her brother's step on the stair. There was something unusual about it. She sat up in bed and listened. Sam wasn't—oh, he couldn't be drinking again! And yet he stum-

bled. She slipped out of bed, threw on a heavy bathrobe, and ran down the hall to his door.

"Who's that?" The words came sharply.

Judith pushed open the door. Sam had just struck a light. "What is it, Sam?" she asked uneasily.

"What's what?" His voice showed excitement.

Judith closed the door. "Oh, Sam!" she exclaimed in woe-begone tones; then she ran up to him. "Why, Sam, what has happened?" for he had not been drinking.

"Got a piece of news, Jude," he said, beginning to tug at his collar, "that your editor'd get out an extra for."

"Oh, Sam, tell me!"

"Nixie on the scoop business. I got it by mistake."

Judith's eyes pleaded for her. Sam sat down on the edge of the bed and tantalizingly gazed at the figure on the rug.

"Of course, if you're honor bound—" sighed Judith. Then she knelt at his feet and began nimbly to untie his shoelaces. "Your fingers must be numb, Sammy. It's a nasty night, isn't it?"

He frowned, brother-like, and looked at his watch. "It'll soon be pulled off now. Gee whizz! but there'll be fireworks all over Latoona tomorrow!"

"Sam, will the other paper get it?" Judith sat back bolt upright.

"Everybody'll get it. It's Associated Press news."

"Oh, Sam, and you can't tell me!" It was a wail. She untied the second shoe.

"Listen, Jude. I'll tell you, because it's too late for you to get in it. I wouldn't have a sister of mine mixing in a mess like this." He looked at his watch again. "A quarter to eleven. In less than an hour Professor Locke will be branded from one end of the country to the other as a would-be wife murderer."

"Sam!" Judith drew back, her big brown eyes dilated with horror. Professor Locke had been her teacher at the academy, the one who had given her the greatest incentive to study. He was a serious student, always investigating some problem of the race, his large, light eyes forever peering inquiringly through their thick glasses, his frail body pushed to keep pace with the demands of his eager, active mind. Had Sam accused her own mother, Judith could not have been more stunned.

"I was at police headquarters tonight going over a criminal record, and I overheard the whole thing," Sam went on. "The transom was open, and the Chief was giving it to two plain-clothes men. It seems that a tough known as Brady, a man with a penitentiary record, has been hired by Locke to shoot his wife. This is the third time Locke has arranged the affair. The other two times something went wrong, and it didn't come off as scheduled; so Mr. Jailbird gets suspicious that a job is being put up on him and trots over to the Chief of Police and gives the plot away. According to him, Locke, with his wife and her sister, is to pass along the high board fence that surrounds the ball grounds tonight on the way home from the theater. Mr. Jailbird is to hide back of the fence, toward the center where there are two missing boards, and when the professor and his party have gone six paces past this hole

he is to step out and fire, wounding Locke slightly in the right arm; then shoot to kill directly into Mrs. Locke's head. She is to be the woman on his right—the professor was very impressive about that; evidently didn't want to lose the wrong woman. Meantime he'll be yelling for help and give out a holdup yarn, while Mr. Jailbird makes his get-away."

"But why take the word of a jailbird?"

"They don't. Brady has a diagram of the place of meeting made out in Locke's writing. It shows the fence, the missing boards, and the position of his wife, distinctly scheduled on his right; but they don't accept even this. So far as I could make out, the Chief's plan is to let Brady carry out the schedule up to the moment of shooting. A plain clothes man will follow Brady, and another will follow Locke. If everything comes off according to the diagram Brady has turned over to the Chief, Locke will be clapped into jail; otherwise, Brady gets his."

Judith sat still with tightly clasped hands and vacant eyes, the partly unlaced shoes forgotten. She was not thinking of her paper or her editor: she was thinking of this man about to face ruin worse than death, this man who had guided and inspired her, who had guided and inspired so many other young people of Latoona; a scholar, a recluse deep in his books, unselfishly interested in men that he might find a solution to their worst problems. What was the answer to this terrible problem in his own life?

Sam yawned. "Get to bed, Judie. We'll know the worst tomorrow."

JUDITH sprang to her feet, and hastily kissing her brother goodnight ran back to her own room. But his words, "We'll know the worst tomorrow," raced through her brain, searing like fire. That was it! They'd know the "worst,"—the newspapers always got the "worst" first, gave out the "worst," unless there was someone at the helm interested in putting out the "best" of a story. And there must be a "best" side to this horrible affair, there must be an explanation! Judith knew the professor's wife slightly,—a rather frivolous person principally interested in bridge and embroidery stitches. Her mind ran on at random among these irrelevant side issues, while pounding centrally came the query again and again, "What is the answer?"

She got into bed; but her brain was on fire. She rose and dressed, scarcely realizing her own intention. She slipped on a long snug coat and a close little cap, then crept noiselessly down the back stairs and out into the black night. It was raining; but she was too absorbed to think of an umbrella. She darted across the lawn to the street, and waited for a car. None was in sight. A black cat leaped out from a hedge, making long, weird shadows. Startled, Judith began to run, and, no car coming, she kept it up. She must reach Main-st. before the crowds poured out of the theater. She remembered that this was one of Latoona's few grand opera nights: the house would hold late. At last she slowed down to a walk and, seeing a car, stopped on the corner, meaning to take it.

A man lurched up. "Sh'pose we go 't the mission?" he proposed drunkenly.

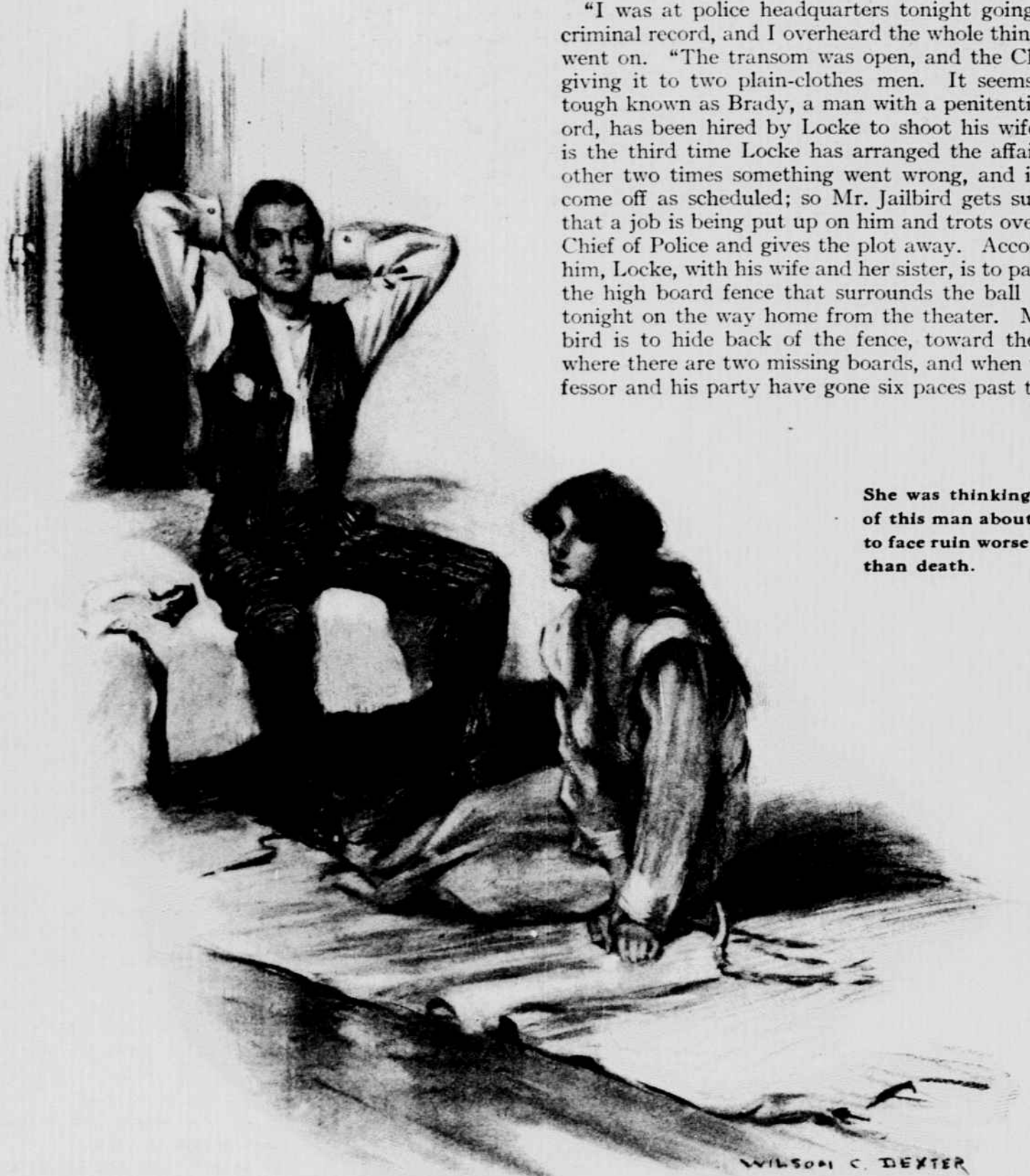
"Sh'pose you move along!" Judith gave back in his own drunken manner, wabbling her head in imitation of him; then, frightened at what she had done, she started again to run. She reached Main-st., and was thankful for the brilliant lights.

When less than a block from the theater the crowds began to pour out. She waited in the shadow of a closed newsstand opposite the entrance. Carriages and cabs rolled away, and streetcars were rapidly filled. Pedestrians hoisted umbrellas, and started up or down the street. Judith looked rapidly from one group to another, eager to locate her "prey"—and fearful lest she might do so. She had begun to feel satisfied that they were not there, to breathe easily, sure at last that it was all a put-up job—when the Professor and his wife appeared. She might easily have missed them; for she had been looking for a group of three. Where was the sister?

THE professor carefully escorted his wife; but he had an awkward manner, as though his mind was habitually elsewhere, and to attend to husbandly duties called for a conscious effort. They paused at the car; but it was full. The professor guided his wife on across the street in the face of her peevish protests. As they reached the pavement he let go her arm to raise his umbrella, and Judith stepped playfully in between the two, catching hold of an arm of each.

"I'm so glad it's you!" she said, trying hard to make her voice natural. "May I walk along with you? I have a—a party—to report out your way."

"Certainly." Mrs. Locke was the one to give con-



She was thinking of this man about to face ruin worse than death.

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sent. The professor, busy with his umbrella, had not saluted her. "Working late, aren't you?"

"I have all sorts of hours," Judith came back.

The crowded car had not yet started. The professor, his umbrella at last doing duty, made a sudden move toward it. "Shan't I put you on your car, Miss Judith? Mrs. Locke and I are walking; but you have no umbrella."

"Oh, I don't mind the rain," Judith protested, gripping his arm tightly.

He didn't speak again. Judith began feverishly to make conversation with Mrs. Locke. She wondered what the professor's wife thought of her coming in between them, leaving her in her evening finery to take the drippings of the umbrella, which could not shield three. This detail loomed large against the night's black hideousness; but Judith was unable to do anything about it.

As they neared the ballgrounds Judith found it almost impossible to keep up her end of the conversational chatter, to suggest bridge prizes, to contribute to the banal gossip. What would the professor do when they reached the high board fence? Suppose there should be a misunderstanding? Suppose the man Brady should fire? She was now the "woman on his right," the woman Brady was to "shoot to kill." Judith realized acutely that life was sweet in spite of certain phases that made it seem otherwise at times. There was her mother—and Sam—and—yes, her editor. He was, after all, her editor, and in the relationship was a certain satisfaction. Life was life, and it was full of many things besides love. She sighed at this heroic thought; for with it flashed the intuitive knowledge that nothing much mattered without love.

They were approaching the high board fence. The professor stopped and shifted the umbrella. "Take my other arm, Miss Judith," he said, in cold, even tones. "I can then protect you both."

Judith was at her wits' end; but only for a moment. "You, Mrs. Locke. You know I don't hear so well with my right ear."

Mrs. Locke good naturedly obliged. The three moved on. The high board fence loomed near. Judith felt her blood grow icy. She heard a movement, and furtively glanced back. She thought she saw a figure dodge behind a tree.

"I'm always afraid of a holdup along here," she said, shivering. "Can't we go another way, Professor?"

"There is no other way; but please exchange places with Mrs. Locke. I am accustomed to her on my right." He stood still, waiting. Something in his positive attitude drove Judith at last to obedience, while her heart almost ceased to beat. Brady was to "shoot to kill" the woman on the professor's right! Mrs. Locke, with a comfortable laugh, dropped into her usual gait, dragging from her husband's arm. Even in the awful moment of conviction the thought went through Judith's mind that a delicate man must find it a burden to have a heavy woman always dragging at his arm. But instantly her brain became busy again with the approaching dénouement.

It was evidently no hoax: the professor meant to put the plan through. He had tried to get rid of her; but he meant to put the night's plan through at all hazards. She looked up into his face, trying to read through the darkness what was written there. His wife chuckled again with that wifely sense of security, of superiority over the single woman who had no strong masculine arm on which to lean. If there was anything unusual in her husband's mood, she evidently did not sense it. Judith wondered if it could possibly be her own inner knowledge that colored every move and made his conduct appear strange.

They entered the shadow of the high board fence. Judith's feet lagged in spite of her; but now the professor was the aggressive one. His grasp on her arm tightened, his thin fingers became steel. He seemed intent on compelling her to go along whether she would or no. The impulse came to pull away and follow in the shadow; but now that was impossible without making a scene. On they walked, the professor clutching her arm with hard, tight fingers, Mrs. Locke dragging heavily from the right, while his right hand held up the umbrella. Mrs. Locke chattered; the professor and Judith were silent.

Judith was going over Brady's instructions. She peered through the darkness, trying to locate the broken place in the fence. She became conscious that

the professor was also watching for the broken place in the fence. She unconsciously slowed down her steps. And the professor, equally unconscious, slowed to her gait. They were doing teamwork, the two, keeping step, minds intent, eyes straining through the dark; while the woman on the right chattered, chattered endlessly. Judith had a desire to slap her mouth. How could she be so insensate? How could she escape feeling the tenseness of the situation? And then she fell to wondering if there was after all any real basis for what she felt. Wasn't it the result of strained nerves? What if there was no Brady, no break in the high board fence, no plain clothes men following? What if it was all a hoax, and—

THE break in the wall became suddenly visible, and Judith trembled from head to foot and stood still like a pony that shies and trembles at an unknown apparition. Mrs. Locke laughed.

"You silly thing!" she cried. "It's only a hole in the wall."

Judith tried to laugh it off. "I thought I saw someone," she said, not budging an inch.

The professor tightened his viselike grip, and once more compelled her to move on, while his wife resumed her chattering, still dragging heavily from the professor's arm. Judith and the professor, taut from head to foot, forged steadily ahead. Six steps it was to be—six steps beyond the hole in the fence. Judith counted their steps. One—two—three—they came more slowly—four—five—she could scarcely lift her foot for the



They were doing teamwork, eyes straining through the dark.

sixth; but the man with his steel clutch compelled her to do so—six—

HALT!

Judith and the professor came to an abrupt standstill: they were expecting the summons. The professor's wife wobbled, and caught at her husband helplessly.

"Professor Locke, you are wanted!" Two men had stepped up behind them. One put a hand on Locke's arm. The trio fell apart.

The second man spoke to Mrs. Locke. "I will see you home. Professor Locke is needed."

Judith searched for her move. She could not well follow the professor. She went with his wife and her escort.

"But what does it mean?" Mrs. Locke kept repeating, curious about the strange summons. And the man kept repeating:

"Just keep cool, Mrs. Locke, and I will explain it."

Judith thought, "How can he explain it? What is the answer?"

In the Locke home the man, who it appeared was a lawyer and a friend of the family, saw Mrs. Locke alone while Judith waited in the study. She knew the little room well. She had many times puzzled over algebra problems under the light of that very reading lamp. Later she had come to the professor in this same room with her own first problems as a young teacher; and once after she went on the paper, nearly a year ago, she had come to look up a reference in one of the professor's books.

Now, tensely waiting, every moment an age, she went to the bookshelves and idly ran her eye over the titles. She came to a row of comparatively new volumes,—new at least to her. Pulling out one that bore the title "Criminology," she turned the leaves. Here were many marginal notes, and the book opened with the ease of one much used. She examined each of the others,—there were a dozen, perhaps, all suggesting close analytical study. Judith was not conscious of puzzling her way into a mystery; but her active mind began to ask, "How does this recent and close study bear on the professor's present problem?"

The lawyer interrupted her cogitations. "You are a friend of the family?"

"Yes."

"Mrs. Locke is in serious trouble. Her husband had planned her—death. You had better go to her."

Judith went into the living room, where she found Mrs. Locke crumpled down in a crying heap. "Mrs. Locke," she said, quickly kneeling beside her, "there is an answer to all this. There must be an answer that will explain. Maybe we can work it out together. Has he seemed—just right—lately? I thought he was dreadfully queer to-night."

"To kill his own wife who loved him so! Oh dear, oh dear!" cried the woman.

"How long has he been studying criminology?" Judith demanded, somehow out of patience with the woman for not putting her mind to work instead of her tear ducts.

"Those new books? Oh, all winter. He's been writing a book—or papers—or lectures—or something or other. Oh dear, and here I was so innocent of any harm, so trusting; while all the time he was planning—"

"Mrs. Locke," Judith interrupted forcefully, "I have a theory. I believe he dwelt on one subject—and worked late and thought hard—and slept little—till he became unbalanced. I believe he belongs in an observation ward of a hospital, not in a jail!"

"A man who could plan to kill—"

"But he has acted queerly, hasn't he?"

Judith again interrupted, her own clear headedness making it difficult for her to have patience with Mrs. Locke's inability to face the issue.

"Not that I noticed. He was always reading or out nights meeting some man or other he professed to be studying. I've hardly got kindling chopped all winter; and as for having him take a hand in a game of cards—"

"That's it!" cried Judith, springing up.

"He was experimenting in criminology, and he became unbalanced. Mrs. Locke, you don't want to prefer charges against the professor—not, at least, till the doctors have had a chance. Let us go together and talk with him. I am positive I am on the right track." She ran to the telephone and ordered a cab.

AT last she managed it. It seemed to Judith that no one in all the world valued time but herself. She was permitted—through the help of the lawyer—to see Professor Locke first. She had never been in a jail before. The clinking keys, the grating sound as the huge iron door swung back, the dim light, the narrow cell, and the professor sitting there so helpless and forlorn on the small iron cot—oh, it was all horrible! But Judith pushed ahead of the guard and hurried in.

"Professor," she began pleadingly, sitting down beside him, "please tell me what this means. The jail will be full of reporters by daylight, if it isn't already, and this terrible story will be flashed all over the world. Help me to help you. Tell me what it means."

The man passed his thin, white hand over his high, narrow brow. He seemed waking slowly to things but

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I confess that I haven't been on the first floor twice in the last year."

"That explains everything!" exclaimed Solder. "You gain all your information from hearsay. You've been in the habit of letting others see and hear for you. The trouble with people of your class lies chiefly in their inexperience with actual conditions. You are impractical theorists. You don't know anything about the people who buy your goods. You come into control of concerns established by your fathers, and already upon such a sound financial footing that there's no necessity to get down to hardpan and learn rudiments. I see that your letter-head reads 'Founded in the eighteenth century.' Believe me, unless you open your eyes and your ears, some day you'll change that to 'Founded in the twentieth.'"

WINTHROP TUYLER pulled at the ends of his mustache and reddened at Solder's plain-spoken sentiments. Then, as if by prearranged signal, he looked askance at his brother. Beekman raised his eyes with almost imperceptible answer. Winthrop nodded.

"Mr. Solder," said the elder Tuyler, "my brother and I have recently reached the conclusion that we require the services of a practical man in this firm. I fear that we are not so well acquainted with the conditions in the clothing market as we had believed. As you may be aware, our interests are not confined to this institution. The family estate is somewhat extensive, and makes heavy demands upon our time. Furthermore," again he broke into one of his charming smiles, "I must reluctantly acknowledge that we are both fond of many things that distract us from these affairs," he broadly indicated the outlying floors.

"Speaking plainly," more bluntly interpolated Winthrop, "we are rich men, and can well afford to live without this income. I for one don't like the confounded business, never did, and never shall! I stick to it because of a certain sort of pride that has existed in the family for generations. It has been a tradition that we must continue the concern, and so—"

"And so—" repeated Beekman. "We should like to have you consider," continued Winthrop, "the proposition of entering our employ."

Samuel Solder stared at the speaker. "Me?" he said, slapping his chest. "I work for no man! I slaved fifteen years, from errand boy up, for old Donald Campbell, scrimping and saving to make myself independent, and now that I am established with a store of my own I won't take a job traveling for anybody. Why, man alive, I'll clean up twenty thousand dollars net this first year!" and he paused to permit his remarks to sink into the intelligence of his hearers.

Beekman lighted a cigarette and twirled the dead match between his fingers. "I don't think you quite understand our proffer. We are agreed that the time has arrived to inject some new blood into Tuyler's, and we both feel assured that it will be of mutual advantage to offer you an interest in the firm."

A mist swarmed before Solder's eyes. "Partnership!" he gasped. "Partnership in Tuyler's, the richest clothing firm in the world!"

A sudden tear trickled down his gaunt face, and he walked to the window lest the others perceive his emotion.

"Gentlemen," he said, gazing out over the roofs of the vast city, "you'll have to pardon me, but your proposition hits me between the eyes. I'm a plain, self-made man, with no particular education or family. And you are bluebloods, society leaders, millionaires. I've dreamed some pretty big dreams for a little fellow. Out in my part of the world there seems to be room enough to imagine yourself doing anything; but," he ended huskily, "I never jumped this far."

Beekman came and stood beside him. He placed a kindly hand on the young man's shoulder. "At our first meeting I admired you. Now I like you. And if you will honor us by accepting this offer, not the least part of my satisfaction will be the prospect of our friendship."

"But why in the name of all that's holy do you pick me out?" blurted Solder.

"You possess ideas, conviction, and courage, youth, self confidence, and honesty; and, finally, you seem to understand this great mystery of advertising, something that we seem to require above all else."

"Perhaps Mr. Solder wishes time to consider," suggested the younger Tuyler.

"Oh, as for my answer," said Samuel, "I can deliver it now. One great, big, whopping YES!"

YOU were right, Beekman," remarked Winthrop, as the new member of Tuyler's took his leave. "He's the man we needed. I must compliment you upon your

judgment. Seems to possess all the attributes we lack. A fine type of self-made man."

Beekman bent before the mirror over his desk and straightened his tie. "Yes, he's essentially self made; but why—oh, why, Winthrop, didn't he devote a little more time to the selection of his nomenclature?"

A TALL, angular man stood in the doorway of a Great Jones-st. hovel, raptly observing the huge bulk of factory across the way. His eyes roved fondly over the broad expanse of stone and steel.

"You're a wonder," he murmured, "and if hard work and hard thought will keep you standing, you will rest on those foundations when the last of this surrounding litter is carted to the dump heaps. I wonder how it feels to grow up, knowing that such big things belong to you? I'll bet it don't mean so much as when you have starved through an orphan boyhood, and schemed and yearned in an attic bedroom with the mountain winds blowing among the shingles and the stars blinking through a rattletrap window. You'll be mine some day, every stick and stone and beam and rafter! I'll win you! I am the better man of the three, and

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dimly comprehended. "I don't quite understand," he said in his oldtime patient way. "I have been trying a little experiment. Why am I interrupted in my researches?" "Criminology, wasn't it? You were studying criminology, and observing the criminal mind act?"

"Certainly, my dear." Judith followed the guard back to the waiting room, where she found Mrs. Locke still crying. She talked with her several minutes, trying to make her see the advisability of recognizing the professor's mental upheaval, of not preferring charges. Then she once more made use of a cab, and in ten minutes she was at "The Mist" office.

SHE pushed open the door of the reporters' room: A single electric bulb lighted Henson's machine, and before it sat Henson in his shirt sleeves, writing rapidly, his face screwed into a knot of concentration, his lips clenched on a dead pipe. He merely nodded when he saw Judith, and went on with his story. The presses were roaring, the morning paper was being printed. Henson must be getting out an extra. Judith, like a racehorse nosing the track, rushed to her own machine, snapped on a light, and was off. She told the story of the night; but she handled it from her inner knowledge, as a case of acute mania. Page after page flew from her machine.

Henson sprang to his feet and rushed to the editor's office. Judith sprang up, jerking her last sheet, a sentence unfinished, from her machine, and rushed after him. The editor, in shirt sleeves, grimed, his face pale under the green eye shade, put out his hand for Henson's story. Judith dropped her own on top of it. The editor pushed back his eye shade and gazed at her in amazement. In the close long coat and little cap she looked like a young boy. She was rain soaked, and the odor of wet wool rose from her clothes.

"What is it, Miss Wells?" he asked, at the same time beginning to run through Henson's story. "We have an extra to get out. Unless you have something important—"

"I have! Read mine first!" "Two scoops in one night? Latoona's waking up." He smiled and bent his eyes to Henson's story. He finished a page and handed it to Henson, who started to the composing room with it.

"Wait!" cried Judith. "Wait, Mr. Henson! Mr. Jones, you must read mine first. Mine is the Locke case."

"Scooped, my dear Princess! So is Henson's."

"Put mine's the truth!"

"His is a big story. Let's see yours."

Henson, frowning, waited, the single sheet fluttering in his impatient fingers. The editor ran his eye quickly over Judith's story. He began to frown.

"A piece of womanish sentimentality. You all carry flowers to murderers."

"Was Henson there?" Judith demanded, her eyes flashing, her small chin in the air. "Well, I was!"

"There! Where? Henson got the call to police headquarters half an hour ago. No one was allowed to see Locke; but he got his story straight from the Chief of Police. We've Brady's diagram showing the whole plan. What more could you want?"

"Poof! I knew all that surface rubbish two hours ago. I've been with him, I tell

I'll take better care of you. I want you more. I understand you better, and I'll be prouder of you. You're a burden on their pride, and letting me in is only the beginning of letting themselves out."

A little ghost in small-clothes heaved a sigh and turned to his emaciated companion. "Jonas," he quavered, and there was infinite sadness in his silent words, "time changes all things, even the pride of the Tuylers. You were right, old friend, we shall soon see the last of our Manhattan. It has become a strange city. One by one the old traditions are crumbling into the dust with the old familiar landmarks."

"Guess I better be ambling back to my hotel," said Samuel Solder, stirring himself out of his reverie. He surveyed the deserted thoroughfare. "Well," he concluded, "it's certainly time for the spirit of progress to enter this neighborhood. Why, the old street is like a graveyard filled with ghosts!" and as he spoke he walked straight into and through Nicholas Rensselaer.

"Progress—progress!" repeated Van Wyncop. "He spoke of the spirit of progress. I don't recall the name."

"Probably after our time," suggested the late mercer.

you! I was a party to—the murder, if you like." Then she told the two men of her night's adventure.

When she finished, the editor, paler than she had ever seen him, handed her story to Henson and tore the other one in two, dropping it into the waste basket. Henson disappeared toward the composing room. The editor scribbled a new set of headlines. From where Judith stood she made out the words "Acute Mania." She sank down in the old crippled chair. The editor rang, and a boy appeared and disappeared with the kinder headlines. Judith got up to go.

SIT down!" The editor's voice came thunderingly. Judith dropped back among the papers as if she had been struck.

"I want to tell you," he began, leaning across the messy desk, "that I don't approve of a young woman of your age and—appearance racing about alone at all hours of the night, mixing up with possible shootings and impossible characters, for the sake of scooping another reporter, or for the sake of getting in a good story, or even for the sake of an old school teacher. I do not in the least approve of it!" His words came caustically. "Do you know what time it is? It is after two o'clock!" He sprang to his feet, then stood by his desk and added with ringing sharpness, "What in thunder is your brother thinking about to let you run such risks? You might have been shot!"

"Then—then Henson would have got the story," Judith retorted, something making her choose flippant words when she never felt less flippant in her life.

"To hell with the story!" he roared, leaning across the desk, his hands clenching its edge. "Sometimes I think you only look feminine: beneath the surface you're nothing but—an efficient machine." He left the desk and began to pace the floor. "There is no true femininity, no maternal instinct, left in young women of today. Just to succeed! To succeed!" He paused, and his eyes bored through the dim light. "My God! what have you given up to succeed at the man's game? Another birthright sold for a mess of pottage!"

THE rain had stopped. The stars were shining. Judith set out to walk home. She could not bear to ride. She wanted to be alone with the wonderful thrill of happiness that had entered in, expanding her whole being. "Oh, God," she cried, as she reached her doorstep, looking back star-eyed into the starry sky, "I thank Thee for this night! Oh, I thank Thee!"

And she went humming softly to bed.

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"Yes, Mees, many times. But the last time was best."

"Where did you go?"

"I went to the probate court to find out about your grandfather's will."



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